

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DECEMBER 9 PRESS ROUNDUP
LONDON FOR AMB/EX

1. MICHAEL GETLER OF WASHINGTON POST REPORTED THAT SECRETARY VANCE, ADDRESSING CLOSED MEETING OF NATO FOREIGN MINISTERS, SAID U.S. WAS LISTENING TO ITS ALLIES, WAS AWARE OF THEIR CONCERNS, AND WOULD WORK WITH THEM IN DEVELOPING POLICIES FOR NEGOTIATING WITH MOSCOW. "ALTHOUGH ALLIES DO HAVE SOME CONCERNS, THEY APPEARED TO BE GOING OUT OF THEIR WAY HERE (BRUSSELS) TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR U.S. EFFORTS, AND TO COMPLIMENT AMERICANS ON DEGREE AND LEVEL OF CONSULTATION," GETLER REPORTED, ADDING, "BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY DAVID OWEN, ACCORDING TO BRITISH OFFICIALS, WENT SO FAR AS TO UNCLASSIFIED

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WARN MINISTERS THAT IT WAS NOW IMPORTANT NOT TO FEED CRITICS OF SALT PROCESS WHO WERE MOST CONCERNED WITH SOME OF MINUTIAE OF BARGAINING AT TIME WHEN ALLIES COULD BE CHAMPIONING CAUSE OF ARMS CONTROL." GETLER SAID ALTHOUGH VANCE TOLD MINISTERS THAT THERE WERE STILL MAJOR UNRESOLVED ISSUES, U.S. WOULD CONTINUE TO RESIST INCLUDING ALL SO-CALLED FORWARD-BASED SYSTEMS IN THESE AGREEMENTS. POST CORRESPONDENT SAID "FORWARD-BASED SYSTEMS ISSUE, HOWEVER, EMBODIES PRECISELY KIND OF THING THAT IS NOW TROUBLING EUROPEANS. THEY FEEL THAT AFTER SALT TWO AGREEMENT, THERE WILL BE

NOTHING MUCH LEFT TO TALK ABOUT THAT WILL INTEREST SOVIETS EXCEPT CURBING THESE FORWARD SYSTEMS WHICH ARE INTIMATELY TIED TO EUROPEAN SECURITY. FURTHERMORE, MAJOR NEW U.S. DEVELOPED WEAPON--CRUISE MISSILE--WHOSE LINK TO FORTHCOMING SALT AGREEMENTS IS STILL UNDECIDED, ALSO MAY EVENTUALLY BECOME ONE OF FORWARD SYSTEMS. THUS EUROPEANS, WHILE NOT WANTING TO UPSET U.S.-SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS, ARE INCREASINGLY EAGER TO HAVE THEIR VOICES HEARD." GETLER POINTED OUT THERE IS "MOUNTING PRESSURE HERE -- ESPECIALLY FROM WEST GERMANY AND BRITAIN -- FOR NEW ALLIED EFFORT TO BREAK STALEMATED TALKS IN VIENNA AIMED AT MUTUAL AND BALANCED EAST-WEST TROOP REDUCTIONS IN EUROPE." HE SAID VANCE, IN DISCUSSING MBFR TALKS, SUGGESTED THAT NATO SEEK BETTER BALANCE IN ITS OWN FORCES AS WELL AS TRYING TO ACHIEVE BALANCE WITH SOVIET BLOC. "THIS WAS SAID TO BE VAGUE WARNING TO NATO COUNTRIES TO DO MORE TO HELP TAKE BURDEN OFF WEST GERMANY, WHICH NOW PROVIDES BIGGEST SHARE OF EUROPEAN GROUND FORCES," GETLER SAID. HE REPORTED THAT ONE TOP EUROPEAN NATO OFFICIAL SAID PRIVATELY THAT U.S. RECORD OF CONSULTATION BY VANCE AND WARNKE HAS BEEN "IMPECCABLE" IN PAST SEVERAL MONTHS AND CONSIDERABLY BETTER THAN DURING PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION.

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2. IN NEWS ANALYSIS FROM BRUSSELS, PAUL LEWIS OF NEW YORK TIMES COMMENTED THAT "STRATEGIC ARMS ISSUE IS NO LONGER PRESERVE OF TWO SUPERPOWERS, AND CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS HAVING TO FACE THIS FACT DURING CURRENT MEET OF NATO." LEWIS OBSERVED THAT "MORE U.S. IS SLOWING NUCLEAR ARMS RACE, MORE ITS EUROPEAN ALLIES ARE BEING DRAWN INTO DEBATE ONCE STRICTLY BETWEEN AMERICA AND SOVIET UNION ON LIMITING THEIR STRATEGIC WEAPONS." LEWIS SAID CHANGING NATURE OF ARMS NEGOTIATIONS WAS HIGHLIGHTED "IN MILDLY EMBARRASSING WAY FOR AMERICAN DELEGATION AT NATO MEETING." AS USUAL, HE POINTED OUT, AMERICANS OPENED BY URGING THEIR "FRUGAL ALLIES" TO SPEND MORE ON DEFENSE. BUT WEST EUROPEANS PUT AMERICANS ON SPOT WITH THEIR REPLY, LEWIS ADDED. "THEY SAID THEY MIGHT LIKE TO STRENGTHEN THEIR DEFENSES BY BUYING SOME NEW AMERICAN HARDWARE THAT CARTER ADMINISTRATION MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SELL THEM WITHOUT DAMAGING NEW ARMS AGREEMENT IT IS NEGOTIATING." WEAPON IN QUESTION IS CRUISE MISSILE. IN VOICING FEARS ABOUT RESTRICTIONS ON CRUISE MISSILES, LEWIS CONTINUED, WEST EUROPEANS ARE NOT TRYING TO SABOTAGE CARTER'S EFFORTS TO PROMOTE DISARMAMENT AND BETTER RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW, "WHICH THEY SUPPORT." BUT, HE SAID, WEST EUROPEANS THINK "U.S. SHOULD PRESERVE POSSIBILITY OF DEPLOYING CRUISE MISSILES IN WESTERN EUROPE AS BARGAINING CHIP TO EXCHANGE IN NEXT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS FOR CUTS IN SOVIET WEAPONS THREATENING WESTERN EUROPE." LEWIS SAID SOME WEST EUROPEANS BELIEVE U.S. IS RAPIDLY LOSING ITS TRADITIONAL SUPERIORITY OVER

SOVIET UNION IN STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS THAT CAN DIRECTLY STRIKE SOVIET TERRITORY, AS BOTH POWERS ACCEPT PARITY AS ONLY FAIR OBJECTIVE IN THEIR NEGOTIATIONS. "THUS, ACCORDING TO THIS VIEW, AS AMERICA'S STRATEGIC SUPERIORITY FADES, ITS WEST EUROPEAN ALLIES ATTACH MORE IMPORTANCE TO NUCLEAR FORCES THEY STILL RETAIN AND BECOME INCREASINGLY INTERESTED IN ACQUIRING NEW WEAPONS, LIKE CRUISE MISSILE, WHICH MIGHT OFFSET OTHER SIDE'S LEAD IN ARMOR AND MEN. BUT AS TWO POWERS REDUCE THEIR NUCLEAR FORCE LEVELS, MOSCOW UNCLASSIFIED

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FEARS WASHINGTON MAY CHEAT BY GIVING ITS ALLIES WEAPONS IT HAS AGREED TO FORGO. EVENTUALLY, IT IS SAID, U.S. MUST ALSO FIND ITSELF NEGOTIATING AWAY NUCLEAR FORCES ACTUALLY STATIONED IN WESTERN EUROPE, WHEN ITS ALLIES WILL BE VERY INTERESTED IN WHAT WARSAW PACT OFFERS IN RETURN. EUROPE'S NEW-FOUND INTEREST IN STRATEGIC ARMS IS LIKELY TO PROVE GROWING ONE."

3. CHARLES CORDDRY OF BALTIMORE SUN, QUOTING DEFENSE OFFICIALS, REPORTED "SOVIET UNION HAS GIVEN WAY ON MAJOR ISSUE IN ARMS NEGOTIATIONS AND HAS AGREED THAT ALL FORMS OF STRATEGIC CRUISE MISSILES -- GROUND AND SHIP-LAUNCHED AS WELL AS THOSE CARRIED BY BOMBERS -- CAN BE TESTED OVER RANGES OF 1,550 MILES." SUN CORRESPONDENT SAID "IN AGREEING TO TESTING OF LAND AND SEA TYPES, WHICH APPARENTLY HAD WORRIED THEM MOST, RUSSIANS HAVE COME MOST OF DISTANCE TOWARD MEETING U.S. DEMANDS FOR CRUISE MISSILE LIMITS AND IN SOME RESPECTS HAVE YIELDED MORE THAN WAS ASKED." CORDDRY SAID "FROM DEFENSE DEPARTMENT'S STANDPOINT, THIS DEVELOPMENT, SAID TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN PAST TWO WEEKS, IS REGARDED AS CRUCIAL IN FRAMING NEW STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATIONS AGREEMENT. FLEXIBILITY IN CRUISE MISSILE DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN CONSIDERED INDISPENSABLE SINCE CARTER ADMINISTRATION CANCELED B-ONE BOMBER PROJECT AND OPTED FOR CRUISE MISSILES AS KEY NEW WEAPONS IN NUCLEAR DETERRENT FORCES." CORDDRY OBSERVED THAT "STORY OF ARMS NEGOTIATIONS OVER RECENT YEARS, IN IMPORTANT PART, HAS BEEN ONE OF SOVIET UNION RECEDING FROM POSITIONS IT HAD STAKED OUT ON CRUISE MISSILE LIMITS.... RUSSIANS PREVIOUSLY HELD OUT FOR NO TESTING OF LAND AND SEA-TYPE CRUISE MISSILES AND NO ACTUAL DEPLOYMENT OF LAND, SEA OR FIGHTER-LANE TYPES WITH MORE THAN 372-MILE RANGE. GRADUALLY THEY CAME TO ACCEPT THAT LONGER-RANGE TYPES COULD BE TESTED, BUT UNCLASSIFIED

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ONLY FROM AIRPLANES REGARDLESS OF WHAT LAUNCHING PLATFORMS THEY WERE DESIGNED FOR. THIS WAS 'FIG LEAF' BEHIND WHICH BOTH SIDES COULD HAVE TESTED ALL TYPES OF CRUISE MISSILES FROM AIRPLANE LAUNCHERS, DEFENSE OFFICIAL SAID. LEAF NOW

HAS BEEN DROPPED, AND MISSILES CAN BE TESTED FROM THEIR NATURAL LAUNCH PLATFORMS AT 1,550 MILE RANGE -- ASSUMING LATEST AGREEMENTS CARRY THROUGH INTO NEW ARMS PACT -- OFFICIALS SAID." SUN CORRESPONDENT SAID DEFENSE OFFICIALS DID NOT SPECULATE ON REASONS FOR MOSCOW'S CHANGE "OTHER THAN TO SAY RUSSIANS THEMSELVES MAY HAVE WORKED IT OUT THAT THEY, TOO, MIGHT WANT TO TEST WEAPONS IN WAY THEY ARE DESIGNED TO BE LAUNCHED -- SEA TYPES FROM SEA LAUNCHERS GROUND TYPES FROM LAND LAUNCHERS, AND AIR-LAUNCHED TYPES FROM AIRCRAFT."

4. SYNDICATED COLUMNISTS ROWLAND EVANS AND ROBERT NOVAK REPORTED THAT "WHITE HOUSE TASK FORCE OF SCIENTISTS, WHOSE MEMBERS AND FINDINGS REFLECT ADMINISTRATION'S DOMINANT ARMS CONTROL PHILOSOPHY, HAS RECOMMENDED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER KILL DEFENSE DEPARTMENT'S PLANS FOR FULL DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSED MX MOBILE MISSILE." EVANS AND NOVAK SAID ERDA CHIEF SCIENTIST JOHN DEUTCH, "WHO IS RESPECTED BY HARD-LINERS," HEADED MX PANEL. "BUT MILD-MANNER DEUTCH IS NOT ASSERTIVE ENOUGH TO WIN AGAINST STACKED DECK: RICHARD GARWIN (IBM), WOLFGANG PANOFSKY (STANFORD), MARVIN GOLDBERGER (PRINCETON), AND SAUL BUCHSBAUM (BELL LABORATORIES), ALL PHYSICISTS, AND ENGINEER JACK RUINA (MIT). ALL ARE ARDENT ARMS CONTROLLERS." EVANS AND NOVAK SAID WHAT MAKES PANEL'S RECOMMENDATION REMARKABLE IS PENTAGON'S TOP-SECRET STUDY IN OCTOBER REJECTING POSSIBILITY THAT ANY ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT COULD CONCEIVABLY PROTECT MINUTEMAN MISSILE. THEY SAID PENTAGON FINDING FULLY ENDORSED BY BROWN. "WHY, THEN, WOULD PANEL OF DISTINGUISHED SCIENTISTS NOT URGE PRESIDENT TO MOVE RAPIDLY TOWARD DEPLOYMENT OF MOBILE MISSILE?" COLUMNISTS ASKED. "BECAUSE KEY FIGURES ON TASK FORCE UNCLASSIFIED

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SUBSCRIBE TO FIXED THEORY OF ARMS CONTROL THAT DEPLORES ANY NEW WEAPONS SYSTEM AS DESTABILIZING SIN AND PREACHES THAT STRIVING FOR U.S.-SOVIET STRATEGIC PARITY IS NO SALVATION." EVANS AND NOVAK SAID TASK FORCE'S REPORT WENT TO PRESIDENT'S DESK DURING WEEK OF NOVEMBER 28 DENYING URGENT NEED TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT MINUTEMAN VULNERABILITY. SCIENTISTS CLAIMED, THEY SAID, THAT AIR FORCE, INSTEAD OF SEEKING DETERRENCE, "IS PUSHING MX FOR WAR-FIGHTING, WAR-WINNING CAPABILITY. ACCORDINGLY, TASK FORCE REACHED ITS VERDICT. IT IS PREMATURE TO BEGIN FULL-SCALE DEVELOPMENT OF MX IN FISCAL YEAR 1978-79 AS PROPOSED. AT PENTAGON, THIS RECOMMENDED DELAY IS VIEWED AS PLAY TO KILL MX, ALREADY DELAYED TWO YEARS FROM ORIGINAL FORD ADMINISTRATION SCHEME." CHRISTOPHER

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